FEMALE SEX OFFENDERS WHO ABUSE CHILDREN WHILST WORKING IN ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXTS: OFFENDING, CONVICTION AND SENTENCING

Andrea J. Darling, Simon Hackett and Kimberly Jamie

School of Applied Social Sciences, Durham University, Durham, United Kingdom

Andrea J. Darling (Corresponding Author), School of Applied Social Sciences, Durham University, 32 Old Elvet, Durham, County Durham, DH1 3HN, United Kingdom. Telephone: 0191 334 1485, Fax: 0191 334 1401, Email: a.j.darling@durham.ac.uk

Simon Hackett, School of Applied Social Sciences, Durham University, 32 Old Elvet, Durham, County Durham, DH1 3HN, United Kingdom. Telephone: 0191 334 1472, Fax: 0191 334 1401, Email: simon.hackett@dur.ac.uk

Kimberly Jamie, School of Applied Social Sciences, Durham University, 32 Old Elvet, Durham, County Durham, DH1 3HN, United Kingdom. Telephone: 0191 334 1485, Fax: 0191 334 1401, Email: kimberley.jamie@durham.ac.uk

.

This work was supported by the Economic and Social Research Council [ES/1447912] who provided funding for this research as a doctoral studentship at Durham University.

WORD COUNT: 7843 words

FEMALE SEX OFFENDERS WHO ABUSE CHILDREN WHILST WORKING IN ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXTS: OFFENDING, CONVICTION AND SENTENCING

To date there has been very little research into the phenomenon of female-perpetrated institutional child sexual abuse (CSA). This study explored 71 cases of CSA perpetrated by women working with children, considered by UK police and courts between 2000 and 2016. Qualitative and quantitative content analysis was employed to examine court reports, professional regulatory body decisions, media reports and an online sentencing database in order to identify perpetrator and victim characteristics, the nature of the offending behaviour, modus operandi and criminal justice system responses. Findings indicate most women offended alone and had no previous criminal or employment records of concern. Victims were typically male and 15-16 years old. Most women received custodial sentences, typically of 2-3 years in length. Implications for policy and practice are also discussed.

Key words: female sex offender, child sexual abuse, institutional abuse, criminal justice, sentencing.

Institutional child abuse has received unprecedented public and political attention over recent years, being subject to intense scrutiny and regular media coverage (Barlow & Lynes, 2015; Campbell, 2016; "Catholic church dismisses", 2016; Cortoni, Hanson, & Coache, 2009; "Teacher who abused", 2016). There has also been a range of investigations and public inquiries at local and national level; for example, the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the UK Independent Inquiry in Child Sexual Abuse, the US Department of Education review into sexual abuse in schools (Shakeshaft, 2004) and

the Robins (2000) review into sexual abuse in schools in Canada. This attention has highlighted the need for research into the factors evident in the perpetration of such abuse in order to help inform prevention strategies, support victims and treat offenders more effectively. At the same time as this increasing political and public interest in organisational CSA, there has also been a growing academic and research interest in female sexual offenders (Reid, 2011). Additionally, media reports as well as depictions in film, television and literature means the public consciousness is being more regularly confronted with female-perpetrated CSA. Despite these areas of exposure there has been very little empirical research conducted examining females who sexually offend in organisational contexts. This study addresses this under-researched type of abuse and the women who perpetrate it.

Institutional CSA and male perpetrators

Despite the attention and increasing research into institutional CSA, very little is known about the incidence and prevalence nor the impacts of this type of abuse and very few studies refer to female perpetrators (Blakemore, Herbert, Arney & Parkinson, 2017; Gallagher, 2000; Spröber, Schneider, Rassenhofer, Seitz, Liebhart, König and Fegert, 2014; Wolfe, Jaffe, Jette & Poisson, 2003). Research has examined a limited range of institutions (Proeve, Malvaso & Delfabbro, 2016) with much attention focused specifically on religious organisations, particularly the Catholic Church. This research has focused primarily on the long-term impacts for victims and survivors of non-recent abuse (Böhm, Zollner, Fegert & Liebhardt, 2014; Firestone, Moulden & Wexler, 2009; Parkinson, Oates & Jayakody, 2010; Spröber et al., 2014; Terry & Ackerman, 2008). As such, shorter-term impacts of organisational abuse have been comparatively neglected. What research does exist in this area is somewhat

dated (there have been few studies in the last 20 years) and findings are not easily applicable to the contemporary circumstances of organisational CSA (Spröber et al., 2014).

Focusing on reports of non-recent abuse by adult victims and survivors, findings from the recent Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2017) show that the majority of abuse occurred in institutions run by religious bodies (58.1%) followed by government-run institutions and then non-government, non-religious institutions. More specifically, abuse took place most often in out-of-home environments, schools and during religious activities. Victims were 10.4 years old on average at the onset of the abuse and most experienced multiple episodes of abuse.

Findings from contemporary research examining sexual abuse in educational institutions specifically (Jaffe, Straatman, Harris, Georges, Vink & Reif, 2013; Motosune, 2015; Moulden, Firestone, Kingston & Wexler, 2010; Shakeshaft, 2004; Solis & Benedek, 2012) has found that perpetrators are predominantly male (Jaffe et al., 2013; Motosune, 2015; Moulden et al., 2010;) and victims female (Jaffe et al., 2013; Motosune, 2015; Shakeshaft, 2004). Perpetrators generally have low rates of psychological or substance abuse issues in comparison to other child sex offenders (Moulden et al., 2010). The use of violence is rare in educator sexual abuse (Jaffe et al, 2013; Moulden et al., 2010; Shakeshaft, 2004) and abuse tends to occur following considerable grooming through special relationships and electronic communications (Jaffe et al, 2013; Motosune, 2015; Solis & Benedek, 2012) with most abuse occurring in school or online (Jaffe et al., 2013; Moulden et al., 2010).

A particular theme in organisational CSA research has been 'professional perpetrators'; those who sexually abuse children in the context of their professional positions, such as teachers, youth leaders, care workers etc. (Colton & Vanstone, 1996; Erooga, Allnock & Telford, 2012; Leclerc, Feakes, & Cale, 2015, 2015a; Leclerc, Proulx & McKibben, 2005; Moulden et al., 2010; Sullivan & Beech, 2002, 2004; Sullivan, Beech, Craig & Gannon, 2011; Vanstone & Colton, 1996). These studies show contradictory findings with regard to motivation and approach to the offending. While Sullivan and Beech (2002) and Leclerc and colleagues (2015) found that many male offenders specifically entered the children's workforce to access children to abuse, others did not find that to be the case (Erooga et al., 2012; Vanstone & Colton, 1996). Professional perpetrators were three times more likely than other male child sex offenders to offend against post-pubescent children and had significantly higher levels of sexual pre-occupation and emotional over-identification with children as well as a significantly lower level of distorted sexual attitudes about their victims (Sullivan et al., 2011).

Female sex offenders

At the same time as organisational CSA is under-researched, so too is CSA perpetrated by women. There are inherent difficulties in trying to determine the prevalence of female sex offending. A recent meta-analysis found that 2.2% of sexual offences reported to police are committee by females, yet victimisation studies showed rates of female sex offending to be as high as 11.6% (Cortoni, Babchishin & Rat, 2016). Conviction and caution rates are also likely to be an under-representation

of the extent of the problem and are potentially influenced by gender biases (Denov, 2004; Dunbar, 1999; Saradjian, 2010).

Studies have shown that professionals demonstrate gender bias and more lenient treatment of female as opposed to male offenders (Bunting, 2005; Denov, 2004a; Kite & Tyson, 2004; Hetherton & Beardsall 1998; Mellor & Deering, 2010). Female sex offenders are less likely to be arrested and convicted than their male counterparts and are more likely to receive shorter sentences (Finkelhor et al., 1988; Reid, 2011; Sandler & Freeman, 2011). Gender has been identified as more influential in sentencing decisions than race, age or ethnicity (Embry & Lyons, 2012; Sandler & Freeman, 2011). Yet research has found female-perpetrated CSA to have particularly harmful consequences for victims (Denov, 2004; Saradjian, 2010).

The existing literature suggests that women tend to sexually abuse children within their families and frequently in conjunction with male offenders (Gannon & Rose, 2008). Existing studies propose a number of common characteristics of female sex offenders: most are aged 26-36 years old (Vandiver & Walker, 2002), tend to have low to middle class socioeconomic status (Mathews, Matthews & Spelz, 1989; Nathan &Ward, 2001) and hold limited educational qualifications (Matravers, 2005; Nathan & Ward, 2001). Many females who sexually offend are considered to lack social skills, have low self-esteem and experience difficulties in relationships (Danvin, 1999; Hislop, 1999; Mathews et al., 1989; Saradjian, 1996). This contrasts significantly with 'professional perpetrators' (Sullivan & Beech, 2002), who are generally well-qualified with successful careers and positive social relationships and reputations.

Female-perpetrated CSA in organisations

Although the research base regarding both institutional CSA and female sex offenders has expanded over the past two decades, literature on women who sexually abuse children whilst working in organisations in positions of trust is extremely limited. This is somewhat surprising, given that childcare provision has been considered to be the second most common context for female child sex offending to occur (Faller, 1987) and that organisational settings are the second most prevalent environments in which CSA occurs (the domestic setting being the first) (Wortley & Smallbone, 2014). There have been several literature reviews and comment pieces about female teachers (Knoll, 2010; Solis & Bendeker, 2012; Stennis, 2006) but very little empirical research. With the exception of the few studies exploring organisational sexual abuse or educator sexual misconduct which have included small numbers of females within their samples (Erooga et al., 2012; Faller, 1987; Finkelhor, Burns, Williams & Kalinowski, 1988; Jaffe, Straatman, Harris, Georges, Vink, Reif, 2013; Ratliff & Watson, 2014; Williams & Farnell, 1990); Hunt's (2006) research in Australia; a US case study on female teachers who sexually offend against students (Stranger, 2015); and a UK study into women who engaged in sexual abuse of 16 and 17 year olds in their professional care (Darling, 2013; Darling & Antonopoulos, 2013), the authors have found no other recent published empirical studies exploring this phenomenon specifically. Consequently, researchers have called for more research into this field (Bunting, 2005; Hunt, 2006; Sullivan & Beech, 2002, 2004).

Given this, it is challenging to determine the extent of the phenomenon. In the Australian context Hunt (2006) estimated that 5-31% of all female perpetrated sexual

abuse occurs in organisational settings, while McLeod's (2015) study of US child protection services cases found that 19% of abusers in professional positions of trust were female. Shakeshaft's (2004) review of educator sexual abuse estimated between 4-43% to have been perpetrated by women. Recent police data arising from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in England shows that 89.4% of suspects abused within organisational contexts and around 9% of suspected abusers were female (National Police Chief's Council, 2017). Final reports from the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2017) record that 10.7% of victims were abused by females **(**although this includes abuse perpetrated by both adult females and female children with harmful sexual behaviours). Although official recorded crime rates are generally low for female sex offenders, rates increase significantly when specific 'abuse of trust' offences are considered (those relating to sexual offences committed against 16 and 17 year olds by adults in official positions of trust). In England and Wales, between 2001 and 2012, 1.27% of those given a caution or convicted for child sex offences were women compared to 11% being convicted, and 20% receiving cautions for abuse of trust offences (Ministry of Justice, 2013).

Studies examining public perceptions of female teachers and sexual involvement with pupils have also found a gender bias in favour of female teachers (over their male counterparts) with participants viewing them less seriously and less punitively (Frketic & Easteal, 2010; Geddes, Tyson & McGreal, 2012; Mackelprang & Becker, 2015). Any apparent gender biases in responding to female-perpetrated CSA in organisational contexts is not altogether unsurprising given that so little is known and understood about this type of abuse, the victims and the perpetrators.

Specific findings on female-perpetrated CSA in organisational contexts are limited. Stranger (2015) found that, in comparison to other studies of female sex offenders, the women in her case study sample of five US teachers had lower rates of childhood sexual victimisation but displayed similar rates of substance abuse, mental health problems and cognitive distortions. She also found the women used similar grooming methods to other educators and were high achievers in their careers. Darling's (2013) case study of ten UK women who had committed 'abuse of trust' sexual offences against 16 and 17 year olds in their professional care, found that the women had similar aetiological factors identified in general female sex offender populations, including unstable lifestyles, relationship difficulties, low self-esteem and emotional self-management problems. Differences were identified in lower levels of substance abuse, a higher age range and socio-economic status and less social skills deficits and chaotic and abusive backgrounds in the sample group. The motivations for these women to abuse appeared to be associated with intimacy needs rather than sexual deficits. Over a quarter of the public school teachers who sexually offended against children in Ratliff and Watson's (2014) study were female. Women were found more likely to commit offences against older students (aged 13 and over) and the findings also suggested that victims may be less likely to disclose female-perpetrated abuse and that school administrators may be less alert to inappropriate behaviour by female teachers.

The increasing attention that is currently being paid to institutional CSA may result in more victims reporting offences by females in positions of trust and it is imperative to understand how to respond appropriately. Given the lack of knowledge and

understanding of this offender population, the circumstances in which this abuse occurs and the impact on victims, this paper aims to further understanding of this under-researched form of abuse. It represents part of the only international study examining this issue and one derived from a large sample. The study involves an extensive analysis of the phenomenon, examining almost a hundred variables, and offers an important contribution to theoretical understanding of this type of sexual offending. By identifying the demographic characteristics of females who have offended in professional contexts and their victims, exploring typical modus operandi and identifying common court and police responses the research aims to inform both policy and practice development to assist in the support and treatment of victims and offenders as well as contribute to effective measures to prevent the future occurrence of female-perpetrated CSA in organisational contexts.

Method

Sample

The sample consisted of 71 women who had sexually abused children whilst working in organisational contexts. By 'organisational contexts', we refer to all organisational and institutional settings where women were employed and sexually offended against children in the course of their work. This includes educational and care settings, sports and leisure organisations, for example.

The sample cases had all been considered by the police and courts in England (87.3%, n=62), Scotland (7.1%, n=5) and Wales (5.6%, n=4) between 2000 and mid-2016. 87% of cases (n=62) concerned contemporaneously perpetrated abuse and 13% (n=9)

involved non-recent abuse (reported more than five years after the abuse had occurred). Only two cases involved a co-abuser (both male).

The vast majority of offenders were teachers (61%, n=43), predominantly those working in high schools, with teaching assistants the second most common (18.3%, n=13). Nine and a half per cent (n=7) of the women were residential care workers or foster carers. Two women were sports coaches and the remaining women were a social worker, a private tutor, a college lecturer, a nursery worker, a cadet officer and a school transport supervisor.

Data Collection

The data were collected from court and tribunal reports (n=7); professional regulatory body hearing decisions (n=19); a UK based court records and sentencing database website (www.lawpages.com) (n=21); media reports (n=10) and a privately constructed UK online database listing perpetrators of child abuse, (www.theukdatabase.com) (n=14). All documents were in the public domain and openly available online. Additional data concerning identified cases were retrieved via extensive Internet searches and media monitoring.

Legal cases and court reports were retrieved via the Westlaw UK database and relevant employment tribunal websites. Searches on Westlaw UK were conducted using an extensive variety of search terms. A small number of additional relevant cases were traced via the 'cases cited' section of those individual case records already returned using the search function. The individual website search functions were also used to locate relevant cases for the three relevant employment and regulatory tribunals in England and Wales concerning those working in education, health and

social care. These were The Care Standards Tribunal, the First-Tier Tribunal (Health, Education and Social Care) and the Upper Tribunal (Administrative Appeals Chamber).

The sentencing database (www.lawpages.com) was searched for all female sex offenders listed between 2006 and 2016 (the period covered by the database). These records were then manually searched to identify cases meeting the criteria for sample selection. Records contained details of the offender, victim, offence, sentence and order as well as a short description of the distinguishing features of the case, which in most instances included some sentencing remarks. The records do not contain full court transcripts or complete sentencing remarks. Although these specific records are limited in this respect, they were used in triangulation with more detailed information contained in media reports of court activity.

Professional regulatory bodies are those organisations with responsibility for regulating their respective profession and holding registers of approved and qualified individuals. In most cases they have procedures in place to de-register individuals if concerns are raised about their conduct and the outcomes of professional conduct and disciplinary hearings are often published online. Data for this study were gathered by retrieving and reviewing online published decisions for cases considered by the National College of Teaching and Leadership, the General Teaching Council for Scotland, Education Workforce Wales, the Care Council for Wales and the Health and Care Professions Council. The websites of all other relevant professional regulators (defined as 'Keepers of Registers' under section 41 of the Safeguarding

Vulnerable Groups Act 2006) were also interrogated to identify any relevant cases arising within the period 2000-2016, however, no further cases were found.

The ukdatabase.com website was designed as a resource tool for parents and communities to obtain information about perpetrators that might be living in their area or have access to their children. The database administrators state on the website that the materials should be used for resource purposes only and that they do not condone any acts of vigilantism after reviewing the material. The website search function was used to retrieve all 'female abuser' cases. These were then reviewed in detail to ascertain relevance. Finally, a number of further cases were identified in online media sources during searches for secondary information in cases already retrieved from the other data sources.

The method of data collection employed is similar to that conducted in several other recent studies into CSA using publically available data sources (Almond, McManus, Giles & Houston, 2015; Jaffe et al*.,* 2013; Motosune, 2015). Our data contained triangulated evidential sources and the inclusion of legal reports and professional regulatory body hearing decision records, where available, further enhances validity as these documents are subject to stringent legal scrutiny making them arguably more accurate than police reports (Almond et al., 2015; Porter & Alison, 2004, 2006).

The content and depth of data varied across the range of sources from highly comprehensive, detailed legal reports to shorter media articles. Although some data sources were minimal, the combined sources for each case provided sufficient detail to identify the relevant demographic information, general circumstances and modus operandi of the offending and police and court responses to it.

The research was conducted in line with the ethical codes of Durham University and the Economic and Social Research Council Research Ethics Framework. Ethical approval was obtained from the Durham University School of Applied Social Sciences Ethics Committee prior to the commencement of the data collection.

Data Analysis

The study involved detailed content analysis of the source documents relating to identified cases. Data were extracted from the court reports, professional regulator decisions, media reports and website content. Data was checked and ratified by all team members. The data collection and analysis employed both quantitative (bivariate and multivariate) variables and qualitative categories dependent on the factor under investigation. There were 98 variables and categories overall. There were fourteen demographic variables. Modus operandi and circumstances of the offending (30 variables/categories) included location of abuse, grooming, early indicators, planning, motivation, co-perpetration, acts and behaviours, methods of contact and situational factors. Responses to the abuse were measured using 23 variables and categories capturing criminal justice and child protection systems responses, employer and professional regulator responses and parental/guardian responses. Factors concerning discovery or disclosure of the abuse were recorded in four categories including: who made the initial discovery or disclosure; if this was officially reported, and if so where to. The short- and long-term impacts of the abuse were recorded in four variables/categories and finally 16 variables and categories were used to record identified risk factors as well as mitigation offered by perpetrators, for example relationship difficulties, mental health issues, personal and work stress.

Individual case records were created for each of the 71 perpetrators and sources relating to that individual were collated and stored together. This allowed for cross-referencing to establish the relevant data required with regard to demographics, modus operandi and criminal justice proceedings. The information was initially recorded on a standardised data collection template and collated onto a spreadsheet to facilitate analysis. This complete data set was subsequently transferred to the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 for the production of descriptive statistics and further analysis.

Results

Characteristics of female offenders

Age

The age of the women at the known onset of the abusive behaviour ranged from 21-56 years (M= 31.3, SD= 7.5) with a modal age of 26 years old (n=10). Most women in this study were under 30 at the time the sexual abuse began but it is notable that 13% (n=9) were over the age of 40. Most typically, women were aged between 25 and 39 years old. A smaller proportion (14%, n=10) fell into the lower age group of 20-24 years, despite this perhaps representing the age range that might be assumed to be most common; i.e. younger women in similar age 'relationships' with older pupils or service users.

Race/Ethnicity

The majority of women in this study were White (80%, n=57), with only a few of Asian (Indian/Pakistani) background (6%, n=4). The ethnicity of 14% (n=10) of the

women could not be identified from the data sources. No African Caribbean women featured among those cases where ethnic background could be determined.

Career stage

Most typically, women were in the established or more senior stages of their careers (i.e., with more than 3 years' experience) at onset of the abuse (32%, n=23). Newly qualified staff only constituted just over a quarter of cases (27%, n=19). One woman was a long-term offender who abused throughout all of her career stages. Those classified in senior positions (13%, n=9) were head or deputy head teachers, heads of department and senior supervisors. All positions that afforded the perpetrators particular power and which would make it more difficult for victims to report the abuse or resist their advances.

Previous criminal and misconduct history

Where it could be identified in the data (in 97% of cases) only two women had any known previous criminal record, one for affray and one for an unspecified minor offence, neither involving children. Furthermore, only three women had any known previous employment misconduct history, all of which concerned non-sexual behaviour with children.

[TABLE 1 here]

Characteristics of victims

Number of victims

There were a total of 127 known victims and the majority of women abused one child (see Table 2). Eleven women offended against multiple victims; in seven cases they abused two children and four had more than two victims. Of these four, one woman had 5 victims, one had 7, one had 12 and one had more than 30 victims. One woman had one confirmed victim, being found guilty at court in relation to offences against this child, but also had allegations made by several further victims not considered at court.

Victim gender

Although male victims were more common (70%, n=50) more than a quarter of the women abused female victims (27%, n=19). Only one abuser had victims of both genders and in one case victim gender could not be determined. Of the 20 women who abused female victims, four were described in reports as being 'homosexual' and three as 'heterosexual'. Sexual orientation could not be ascertained for 13 of those who abused girls, however two of these women were married to male spouses. A number of them were also in, or had histories of, heterosexual relationships.

Victim age

Exact ages could be determined for 83 victims of 69 female offenders. Victims ranged from under 1 year to 17 years old (M=15.1 years old; SD=1.3) with a modal age of 16 years at the onset of the abuse. Two-thirds of the women offended against 15-16 year olds (66%, n=47). Only three women offended against children under the age of 12, therefore the majority of victims (93%) were pubescent or post-pubescent. In a

number of cases the abuse occurred around the time that the victim was about to leave the school or care environment. This could suggest the adult's desire to retain an on-going relationship with a young person with whom they may have spent a considerable time over the preceding months and years. It is not clear whether the abuse in each case resulted from the woman's need to maintain the relationship, fearing a loss of the child from their lives in the future, or whether her sexual interest has existed for some time and she identified this as the best time to instigate a sexual relationship now the victim is about to leave the shared environment. Of course, a further explanation could be that young people of this age are also reaching sexual maturity and approaching adulthood, which may make them more attractive to women who do not have general paedophilic or hebephilic interests.

Victim vulnerability

Vulnerability can be both a subjective and complex term. Following examination of public and policy discourse the Children's Commissioner for England recently defined vulnerable children in 32 different categories (Children's Commissioner for England, 2017, 2017a), separated into four broad groups: children directly supported or accommodated by the state; children whose actions put their future at risk (including children excluded from school or who have involvement with the criminal justice system); children with health issues (including disability and mental health difficulties) and children experiencing family issues (for example parental substance abuse, homelessness or unstable accommodation). Children identified as falling into these groups were categorised as 'vulnerable' for the purposes of this study.

Almost half of the victims (49% of cases where data were available) had a recognised vulnerability over and above their status of being a child. However, it should be noted that data identifying specific vulnerability was not available in 45% of cases in the complete sample. Nonetheless, the level of specific vulnerability is particularly high when compared to the findings in other educator or institutional abuse study samples, such as 17% of victims having special educational needs in Gallagher's (2000) study and 8.8% of victims having disabilities in Shakeshaft's (2004) review.

Additionally, in those cases where it could be established from the data (n=30), a very high proportion of victims (83%) were experiencing particular issues or problems at the time of the abuse. These tended to be family problems or difficulties at school, for example bullying or problems with friends. Notably, several of the female victims were described as experiencing 'confusion' about identifying themselves as gay or were having problems in disclosing this to family and friends. In many cases the female offender was acting as a mentor or confidante to support the child, (in relation to the range of problems described) either officially or unofficially, around the time the abusive relationship with them developed.

[TABLE 2 here]

Modus Operandi

Duration of abuse

The duration of sexually abusive behaviour ranged from four days to four years.

Abuse most typically lasted between one and six months (41%, n=29). However, almost a third of the women carried out the abuse over a longer-term period of between six months and three years (32%, n=23). There are several definitional complexities involved in understanding the trajectory of this type of abuse and its duration. First, in some cases, although the sexual elements of the abuse may have been relatively brief, there were often lengthy periods of time prior to that where grooming behaviours or abusive emotional relationships took place. Second, in other cases, the abusive relationships included a period after the position of trust relationship ended. Usually this came about as a result of either the child ceasing to be involved in the organisational environment, for example by leaving school, or as a result of the offender ceasing to be employed in the organisation. In such cases, although the abusive relationship may no longer have been legally prohibited, the fact that it was initially established and fostered in the context of a position of trust meant that the abusive element extended beyond the organisational context.

Location of abuse

The sexually abusive behaviour most typically occurred outside of the organisational environment (61%, n=43) with only a small proportion taking place exclusively within the work environment itself (11%, n=8). A quarter of cases (n=18) involved abuse taking place both within and outside of the organisational context.

Notably, over half of the cases (54%, n=38) concerned abuse that occurred in either the offender's or victim's home. Additional identified external locations included: the offender's car, beaches, parks, car parks, hotels, fast food restaurants, dog walking venues, cinemas, golf clubs, day trips to other places, theme parks, industrial estates,

neighbours' or family member's homes and public toilets. Abuse taking place within the organisational environment occurred in store cupboards, classrooms, toilets, staff or victim bedrooms in residential settings and communal areas.

Sexually abusive or sexually explicit contact in the virtual environment such as online via email, social media or texting was identified as occurring in 54% (n=38) of cases. Two cases involved abuse occurring exclusively in the virtual environment. Most commonly, social media contact was through private channels, such as instant messaging, however in a few cases the offender engaged in public online contact with the victim and other children. Often, initial public online communications quickly moved on to private messaging and the creation of pseudo accounts by both the offender and victim in order to conceal the communication between them. Sometimes this was after concerns had already been raised about contact between the adult and child.

Grooming

Grooming behaviours were evident in more than three-quarters (77%, n=55) of cases. Given the limitations of the data sources it was not always easy to identify if an offender's actions constituted intentional, pre-planned grooming behaviour (i.e. that preceding sexual contact) or were rather part of the abusive relationship itself. In some cases involving adolescent victims, abusive relationships developed gradually through increasingly close friendships and emotional connections, which then progressed to sexual contact. In these instances, the sexual contact was typically viewed by the abuser as a 'genuine' and appropriate adult relationship, without any apparent plan or original intention on the behalf of the offender to enter into sexual

contact with the adolescent victim. Typically, the build-up to the sexual contact included 'flirtatious' contact via text messages or social media exchanges, meeting outside of the work environment or allowing or encouraging the adolescent to visit the adult's home. Other grooming behaviours commonly identified among child sex offenders, such as buying gifts or grooming the child's guardians, were rarely evident.

Mobile phone/online contact

Almost two-thirds of cases (62%) involved known mobile phone contact between the abuser and victim, either by text messaging or through voice calling. Online contact between the abuser and victim (via email or social media sites) was evident in 42% (n=30) of cases. The extensive use of technology and social media as a facilitator was also highlighted in Jaffe et al.'s (2013) study of Canadian teacher-student sexual abuse. In some cases, the exchange of personal contact information between the abuser and victim occurred originally in a legitimate manner, (e.g. exchange of emergency contact details during school trips or email exchanges regarding revision during examination leave) but then the contact became more frequent, increasingly more personal and ultimately flirtatious and sexual in nature. In other cases, the child found the adult's personal social media profile or mobile telephone number and instigated contact (or vice versa), sometimes openly in conversation with other peers, which then proceeded to private messaging and the contact escalated from there.

Some employers clearly had policies prohibiting personal mobile phone or Internet communication between adults in positions of trust and young people but others did not. Even where such policies existed, offenders would generally disregard them or create pseudonym accounts to conceal the inappropriate contact.

Abusive acts

As discussed above, sexual communications via mobile or online methods were typical. With regard to sexually abusive acts kissing, hugging and hand-holding were common (46%, n=33). The data sources were at times unspecific as to the nature of the sexual contact, however, those leading to charges or convictions involved more intrusive contact sexual abuse and over half of the cases (53%, n=38) involved sexual intercourse or oral sexual abuse.

[TABLE 3 here]

Disclosure

Victims' parents or guardians (20%, n=14) most commonly made the official disclosure of the abuse to the authorities. Victims made the disclosure in 17% of cases (n=12) and the abuser themselves self-disclosed in 6% (n=4) of cases. Others reporting the abuse were colleagues of the perpetrator, friends or peers of the victim or offender, other parents, members of the public and other professionals. The abuse was usually reported to the organisation concerned in the first instance (56%, n=40). Thirty-one per cent (n=22) of disclosures were reported to the police first and only 3% (n=2) were initially reported to social services.

Abuser response

Most offenders (68%, n=48) admitted the behaviour when the allegations came to light or during police or court processes. Fifteen per cent (n=11) of the women denied the abuse and 15% (n=11) made partial admissions. Where partial admissions were

made, the perpetrator usually accepted that lower level contact had occurred, such as kissing or exchanging sexualised messages with the victim, but denied more serious sexual contact or argued that their intentions were not sexual.

Criminal Justice System response

Police action

In those cases where the matter was reported to the police, most resulted in charges being laid and court proceedings (77%, n=55). However, almost a quarter (22%, n=16) did not proceed beyond police investigation or interview stage. It is important to note that the results here are impacted by the nature of the data sources used (i.e. court reports, sentencing data and media reports on court cases). The factors resulting in decisions not to proceed are discussed further below.

Criminal justice outcomes

Offences

The most common offences charged were 'abuse of position of trust (sexual activity)' (39%, n=28) and 'sexual activity with a child' (25%, n=18). 'Abuse of position of trust (causing/inciting a child to engage in sexual activity)' (14%, n=10) and 'indecent assault' (11%, n=8) were also some of the more typical charges. Four women (6%) were charged with offences relating to indecent images of children; in three cases these offences concerned the exchange of sexual images with the specific victim in the case rather than reflecting any wider interest in indecent images of children. Other less commonly charged offences included: 'causing a child to watch a sexual act'; 'sexual activity in the presence of a child'; 'indecency with a child'; 'child abduction'; 'sexual touching of a child'; 'meeting a child after sexual grooming' and

'inciting child to engage in sexual activity'.

Pleas

More than half of all the women in the sample pleaded guilty to the offences charged (58%, n=41) and a further 10% (n=7) made partial guilty pleas (i.e. pleading guilty to some offences and not guilty to others). 10% (n=7) of the women pleaded not guilty to all charges.

Outcomes and sentencing

Almost three quarters of all the women in this study (73%, n=52) were convicted of sexual offences against a child and, of those who pleaded not guilty, 78% were found guilty after trial.

Almost all cases that proceeded to court were heard in crown courts with only two being heard in magistrates' courts (4%). Of the 52 women who were convicted (73%, n=52), 60% (n=31) were sentenced to immediate custody and over a quarter (27%, n=14) received suspended custodial sentences. 10% of cases (n=5) resulted in community sentences, one woman received a conditional discharge and one woman was detained under the Mental Health Act (2007).

Sentences for immediate custody ranged from five months to indeterminate imprisonment, most typically being two to three years in length. Suspended custodial sentences ranged from three months to one year. Community sentences primarily involved community payback or community service, ranging from six months to two years in length.

In a third of convictions, the court imposed other prohibition orders (n=15); these were predominantly sexual offences prevention orders or sexual harm prevention orders. One woman was issued a restraining order. These orders typically prohibited the offender from contacting the victim, having unsupervised contact with children or restricted their use of the Internet.

Seventy two per cent of all perpetrators (n=51) were required to sign the sex offenders' register. Required registration periods ranged from six months to indefinite, with most offenders being subject to the requirements for either 10 years (45%, n=23) and indefinitely (25%, n=13). Just over a quarter of all the women (27%) were also banned from working with children.

[TABLE 4 here]

Mitigation and explanation

Details of the offender's mitigation or explanation for her behaviour could be ascertained in two-thirds of cases. The most common reasons the women gave in mitigation were relationship difficulties with their adult partner and mental health issues. Other explanations offered were: emotional vulnerability; feeling genuine love/infatuation for the victim; lack of training; ill health; intimidation by the victim; the abuser having been a previous victim of abuse; cognitive distortions and alcohol abuse.

In ten per cent of cases (n=7) the perpetrator's response to the abuse contained overt evidence of victim blaming. This mostly related to the woman arguing that she was persistently pursued by the victim and acted unwisely in responding to this or in not reporting it to others. A few women claimed they were the victims of sexual assaults by the young person themselves; explanations which were generally rejected by the court.

Factors evident in police and Crown Prosecution Service decisions

There were 11 cases (15% of the total sample) where no further action took place following initial investigations. In three cases the reason was not available and in two cases the victim refused to make a complaint or both the victim and their parents did not wish to pursue the matter. The police and/or Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) decided not to pursue matters in six cases. In three of these, the police considered the criminal threshold not met or took the view there was insufficient evidence to justify further action. In one case, the CPS took the view there were serious credibility issues with the alleged victim however, interestingly, that view was not shared by the investigating officers, the professional regulatory panel and a tribunal judge who all found this witness credible and the allegation proved. In the two remaining cases the CPS decision not to pursue was cited in the data sources but there was no clear explanation of the rationale available.

Discussion and Implications for Policy and Practice

The findings of the study suggest that women abusing in professional contexts do not fit general stereotypical portrayals of female sex offenders as those being coerced by men into offending against their own young children. Nor do they support a view of female professional perpetrators as young, naïve and inexperienced teachers getting

involved in sexual ‘trysts’ with sex-obsessed teenage boys.

First, almost all the women offended alone and had no previous criminal histories or employment records of concern. Most were aged from their mid-twenties to late thirties and were well experienced in their profession at the time of the abuse, some holding senior positions affording particular power over children in their care. It is highly likely that the perpetrators had received appropriate child protection training and would have had a good understanding of appropriate adult-child boundaries, however, they chose to ignore these.

Unlike many male professional perpetrators in other studies (Leclerc et al., 2015; Sullivan & Beech, 2002) the women in this study could not be identified as predatory paedophiles seeking to enter employment to gain access to children to abuse, rather it appears that they were professionals without underlying intent or sexual motivation who allowed themselves to (or could not stop themselves from) engaging in sexually abusive behaviours. Therefore, situational and environmental factors in organisational contexts become critical; it is vital to understand features of the physical and social environment that may foster, or indeed inhibit, the abuse process.

The fact that so few of these women had any known criminal history or previous employment misconduct issues indicates that existing pre-employment and criminal record checks appear to offer minimal assistance in preventing this type of abuse. This, therefore, increases the importance of more sophisticated recruitment practices, such as value-based interviewing (Erooga, 2012), as well as increasing the emphasis on on-going monitoring and supervision of employees once in post. Having clear

policies and procedures in place and reacting quickly when any breaches are identified is important, as is following up concerns and investigations that do arise with appropriate supervision.

In comparison with other general studies of female sex offenders (Gannon et al., 2008; Mathews et al., 1989; Saradjian, 1996) some similarities in aetiology of offending are evident in this sample, such as: unstable lifestyles; relationship difficulties; emotional self-management problems; low self-esteem and feelings of isolation and loneliness. A lack of social support following personal relationship problems or major life stressors was commonplace, similar to that found in Gannon et al.'s (2008) study. Differences between the current sample and those in other studies relate to lower levels of substance abuse and mental health problems; a higher age range and socio-economic status and to some extent chaotic and abusive backgrounds.

The primary motivations to abuse, emotional and sexual gratification, were similar to those found in other female sex offender studies (Almond et al., 2015; Faller, 1996; Gannon et al., 2008, 2010). The women in this sample also appeared to be seeking intimacy and desiring social contact that was lacking in their lives around the time of the abuse. These issues created vulnerabilities in some cases, contributing towards the woman seeking an inappropriate and distorted form of 'support' and 'solace' from the children and young people with whom they worked. The apparent prevalence of personal, emotional and mental health problems occurring for these women around the time of their offending highlights potential warning signals for employers. Clearly this is not to say that all those in positions of trust suffering difficulties in their lives are likely to present a risk to children in their care, but it does seem important that

employers respond to known issues and act accordingly. Additional support, as well as increased supervision where any other issues or concerns might be raised, may help prevent the development of such inappropriate emotional and sexual relationships.

Victims in this study were most typically male and 15-16 years old and abuse of pre-pubescent children was rare. Although this study found that victims were typically male, over a quarter were female. This is an interesting finding particularly given that, for several of the women, the sexual abuse of a female victim appears to have been their first same-sex sexual experience. Most existing typologies fail to address females who abuse teenage victims of the same sex and those that do address homosexual female sex offenders (Sandler & Freeman, 2007; Vandiver & Kercher, 2004) are not able to account for the type of same-sex abuse exhibited in several of the cases in this study. This appears to be a beneficial area for further exploration in future research.

The fact that many victims identified in this study were particularly vulnerable children is a clear concern. A significant number of perpetrators were initially acting in the capacity of mentor or confidante to the victim, either officially or unofficially, leading to increased unsupervised contact between them. Such circumstances emphasise the need for any mentoring or support arrangements to be well monitored and supervised, particularly where children have particular needs or vulnerabilities, and for the need to be highly cautious about informal relationships that arise between children and adults in positions of trust.

Given that much of the abuse occurred outside of the organisational environment, including online, indicates that employers need to pay at least equivalent attention to any occurrences of adult-child contact (either in person or via electronic means) outside of the organisational context as to efforts to minimise opportunities for abuse within the work environment. Parents and guardians also need to be fully alert to any contact by a female in a position of trust with their child outside of the organisation in the same way they would be if that adult were male.

Previous theory has suggested that female child sexual abusers are likely to abuse in all the ways that males do, except they use objects instead of a penis for penetration (Saradjian & Hanks, 1996). However, in our sample, given that the nature of many of the relationships between the teenage victim and adult abuser was more akin to surrogate adult relationships, the abusive acts themselves were less physically violent and aggressive than those included in other samples of females who sexually offend against children (Kaufman, Wallace, Johnson & Reeder, 1995). Coercion tended to be more emotionally manipulative and although sexually abusive acts were commonly found to be kissing, hugging and hand-holding, over half of the cases involved sexual intercourse or oral sexual abuse.

Limitations

Given the number of cases of female child sexual offenders detailed in published statistics, the amount of cases included in this study is likely to represent a comprehensive sample of this specific abuse type in the UK context. However, the study is limited in several important regards. The intention of the study was not to

produce generalisable data but rather to explore this particular phenomenon in some descriptive depth and in a way not previously done with such a sample size. As is typical with any study using secondary data analysis the findings are restricted by the quality and depth of the data sources. The data were limited by the content of the sources available; they did not constitute complete court or police evidence files for example. Consequently, an entirely comprehensive and complete picture of the case as a whole was not available. However, this is rarely the case in any study with such difficult-to-reach populations. All available sources for each case were cross-referenced to improve validity and reliability of the data extracted. Pre-existing, first hand evidence and direct quotes from abusers (e.g. those contained in transcribed text messages or online communications) were helpful in providing information about the circumstances of the abuse and the abuser's motivations, thinking and behaviour at the time that may not have been openly forthcoming in direct interviews with the subjects themselves (i.e. due to impression management for example).

Conclusion

Given that there has been virtually no previous empirical research specifically examining women who sexually abuse children in organisational contexts, the findings of this study go some way to further understanding of this specific phenomenon. Although there are similarities with some offender types identified in existing typologies (e.g., *Teacher-lover*; Mathews et al., 1989; *Heterosexual nurturer*; Vandiver & Kercher, 2004) these perpetrators, their method of victimisation and the responses to their offending differ in numerous ways to those found in existing research. The situational factors unique to organisational contexts and the positions of

power these women held mean that existing considerations of female-perpetrated CSA require some revision when dealing with perpetrators and victims of this specific type of abuse.

This research has contributed to the on-going development of theory into female sex offenders, which is still in its infancy and requires significant further development given the apparent unsuitability of models derived on male sex offenders for female populations (Gannon et al., 2010). Through increased understanding of the characteristics of those vulnerable to abuse and to being abused, as well as common modus operandi of female perpetrators in this context we hope to have enhanced knowledge in order to assist future prevention efforts in this regard.

References

Almond, L., McManus, M. A., Giles, S., & Houston, E. (2015). Female Sex Offenders An Analysis of Crime Scene Behaviors. *Journal of interpersonal violence*. doi:10.1177/0886260515603976

Barlow, C., & Lynes, A. (2015). Female Child Sex-offenders. *Journalism and Mass Communication, 5*(9), 480-494. doi: 10.17265/2160-6579

Blakemore, T., Herbert, J. L., Arney, F., & Parkinson, S. (2017). The impacts of institutional child sexual abuse: A rapid review of the evidence. *Child Abuse and Neglect*.

Brayford, J. (2012). Female sexual offending: An impermissible crime. *Crime Prevention & Community Safety, 14*(3), 212-224. doi:10.1057/cpcs.2012.5

Bunting, L. (2005). *Females who sexually offend against children: Responses of the child protection and criminal justice systems*: NSPCC London.

Campbell, B. (2016, 12 September). The scale of historical sexual abuse in the UK is a catastrophe. We need a catharsis. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/sep/12/child-sex-abuse-inquiry-uk-scale-catastrophe

Catholic church dismisses key recommendations from landmark inquiry into child abuse. (2017, 15 December). *The Guardian*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/dec/15/royal-commission-final-report-australia-child-abuse

Children's Commissioner for England (2017). *Defining child vulnerability: Definitions, frameworks and groups*. London

Children's Commissioner for England (2017a). *On measuring the number of vulnerable children in England*. London

Cortoni, F. (2015). What Is So Special About Female Sexual Offenders? Introduction to the Special Issue on Female Sexual Offenders. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment, 27*(3), 232-234. doi:10.1177/1079063214564392

Cortoni, F., Hanson, R., & Coache, M. È. (2009). Female Sexual Offenders: Prevalence and Recidivism. *Revue internationale de criminologie et de police technique et scientifique, 62*(4), 319.

Danvin, P. A. (1999). Secrets Revealed: A Study of Female Sex Offenders. In E. Bear (Ed.), *Female sexual abusers: Three views* (pp. 9-134). Brandon, Vermont: Safer Society Press.

Darling, A. J. (2013). *How and Why Do Women Engage in Abuse of Trust Behaviours?* (MSc), Teesside University.

Darling, A. J., & Antonopoulos, G. A. (2013). 'Notes on a Scandal': Why do Females Engage in Abuse of Trust Behaviours? *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology, 2*, 525-537.

Denov, M. S. (2004a). *Perspectives on Female Sexual Offending: A Culture of Denial*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Denov, M. S. (2004). The Long-Term Effects of Child Sexual Abuse by Female Perpetrators A Qualitative Study of Male and Female Victims. *Journal of interpersonal violence, 19*(10), 1137-1156. doi:10.1177/0886260504269093

Dunbar, T. (1999). Women Who Sexually Molest Female Children *Female Sexual Abusers: Three Perspectives* (pp. 311-394). Brandon, Vermont: Safer Society Press.

Embry, R., & Lyons, P. M. (2012). Sex-Based Sentencing Discrepancies Between Male and Female Sex Offenders. *Feminist Criminology, 7*(2), 146-162. doi:10.1177/1557085111430214

Erooga, M. (2009). *Towards safer organisations: Adults who pose a risk to children in the workplace and implications for recruitment and selection*. London: NSPCC.

Erooga, M. (2012). *Creating safer organisations: Practical steps to prevent the abuse of children by those working with them* (Vol. 35): John Wiley & Sons.

Faller, K. C. (1987). Women who sexually abuse children. *Violence and Victims, 2*(4), 263-276.

Faller, K. C. (1996). A clinical sample of women who have sexually abused children. *Journal of child sexual abuse, 4*(3), 13-30. doi:10.1300/J070v04n03_02

Finkelhor, D., Williams, L. M., Burns, N., & Kalinowski, M. (1988). *Nursery crimes: Sexual abuse in day care*. Newbury Park, CA, Sage Publications, Inc.

Frketic, K., & Easteal, P. L. (2010). 'Public Perception of Teachers' Sexual Misconduct: Does the Sex of the Teacher Make a Difference?'. *Alternative Law Journal, 35*(3), 142-146.

Gallagher, B. (2000). The extent and nature of known cases of institutional child sexual abuse. *British Journal of Social Work, 30*(6), 795-817.

Gannon, T., Waugh, G., Taylor, K., Blanchette, K., O'Connor, A., Blake, E., & Ciardha, C. Ó. (2014). Women who sexually offend display three main offense styles: A re-examination of the descriptive model of female sexual offending. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 207-224. doi:1079063213486835

Gannon, T. A., & Rose, M. R. (2008). Female child sexual offenders: Towards integrating theory and practice. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 13*(6), 442-461.

Gannon, T. A., Rose, M. R., & Ward, T. (2008). A descriptive model of the offense process for female sexual offenders. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment, 20*(3), 352-374. doi:10.1177/1079063208322495

Geddes, R. A., Tyson, G. A., & McGreal, S. (2013). Gender Bias in the Education System: Perceptions of Teacher–Student Sexual Relationships. *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law, 20*(4), 608-618.

Harris, D. A. (2010). Theories of Female Sexual Offending. In T. A. Gannon & F. Cortoni (Eds.), *Female Sexual Offenders: Theory, Assessment and Treatment* (pp. 31-51). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Hetherton, J., & Beardsall, L. (1998). Decisions and attitudes concerning child sexual abuse: Does the gender of the perpetrator make a difference to child protection professionals? *Child Abuse and Neglect, 22*(12), 1265-1283. doi:10.1016/S0145-2134(98)00101-X

Hislop, J. (1999). Female Child Molesters. In E. Bear (Ed.), *Female Sexual Abusers: Three Views* (pp. 135-310). Brandon, Vermont: Safer Society Press.

Hunt, L. (2006). *Females who Sexually Abuse Working in Organisations with Children*. Retrieved from http://childwise.blob.core.windows.net/assets/uploads/files/Online%20Publication/Females_Who_Sexually_Abuse_Child.pdf

Jaffe, P., Straatman, A.L., Harris, B., Georges, A., Vink, K., & Reif, K. (2013). Emerging Trends in Teacher Sexual Misconduct in Ontario 2007-2012. *Education Law Journal, 23*(1), 19.

Jennings, K. T. (1993). Female child molesters: A review of the literature. In M. Elliott (Ed.), *Female sexual abuse of children* (pp. 219-234). London: The Guildford Press.

Kaufman, K., Wallace, A., Johnson, C., & Reeder, M. (1995). Comparing Female and Male Perpetrators' Modus Operandi: Victims' Reports of Sexual Abuse. *Journal of interpersonal violence, 10*(3), 322-333. doi:10.1177/088626095010003006

Kite, D., & Tyson, G. (2004). The impact of perpetrator gender on male and female police officers' perceptions of child sexual abuse. *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law, 11*(2), 308-318. doi:10.1375/pplt.2004.11.2.308

Knoll, J. (2010). Teacher sexual misconduct: Grooming patterns and female offenders. *Journal of child sexual abuse, 19*(4), 371-386.

Leclerc, B., & Cale, J. (2015). Adult sex offenders in youth-oriented institutions: Evidence on sexual victimisation experiences of offenders and their offending patterns. *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice* (497), 1. doi: 10.1186/s40163-015-0044-3

Leclerc, B., Feakes, J., & Cale, J. (2015). Child sexual abuse in youth-oriented organisations: tapping into situational crime prevention from the offender's perspective. *Crime Science, 4*(1), 1-12. doi:DOI 10.1186/s40163-015-0044-3

Leclerc, B., Proulx, J., & McKibben, A. (2005). Modus operandi of sexual offenders working or doing voluntary work with children and adolescents. *Journal of sexual aggression, 11*(2), 187-195.

Mackelprang, E., & Becker, J. V. (2015). Beauty and the Eye of the Beholder Gender and Attractiveness Affect Judgments in Teacher Sex Offense Cases. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 1079063215597646.

Mathews, R., Matthews, J. K., & Speltz, K. (1989). *Female sexual offenders: An exploratory study*: Safer Society Press Orwell, VT.

Matravers, A. (2013). *Sex Offenders in the Community*: Abingdon, Oxon, Routledge.

McLeod, D. A. (2015). Female Offenders in Child Sexual Abuse Cases: A National Picture. *Journal of child sexual abuse, 24*(1), 97-114. doi:10.1080/10538712.2015.978925

Mellor, D., & Deering, R. (2010). Professional response and attitudes toward female-perpetrated child sexual abuse: a study of psychologists, psychiatrists,

probationary psychologists and child protection workers. *Psychology, crime & law, 16*(5), 415-438. doi:10.1080/10683160902776850

Ministry of Justice, (2013). [Response to Freedom of Information access request 26 June 2013 FOI Ref 383-83039].

Mototsune, T. (2015). *Ontario College of Teachers Cases of Teacher Sexual Misconduct.* The University of Western Ontario. Retrieved from http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/2840/

Nathan, P., & Ward, T. (2001). Females who sexually abuse children: Assessment and treatment issues. *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law, 8*(1), 44-55.

National Police Chief's Council (2017). *Operation Hydrant- Quarterly Statistics - Breakdown of Live Investigations*. Retrieved from: http://www.npcc.police.uk/NPCCBusinessAreas/OtherWorkAreas/OpHydrant/Statistics.aspx (accessed on 28 September, 2017)

Porter, L. E., & Alison, L. J. (2004). Behavioural coherence in violent group activity: An interpersonal model of sexually violent gang behaviour. *Aggressive Behavior, 30*(6), 449-468. doi:10.1002/ab.20047

Porter, L. E., & Alison, L. J. (2006). Leadership and hierarchies in criminal groups: Scaling degrees of leader behaviour in group robbery. *Legal and Criminological Psychology, 11*(2), 245-265. doi:10.1348/135532505X68692

Ratliff, L., & Watson, J. (2014). A Descriptive Analysis of Public School Educators Arrested for Sex Offenses. *Journal of child sexual abuse, 23*(2), 217-228. doi:10.1080/10538712.2014.870275

Reid, S. S. (2011). Bad Bad Teacher: How Judicial Lenience, Cultural Ignorance, and Media Hype have Inevitably Lead to Lighter Sentences, Underreporting and Glamorization of Female Sex Offenders. *Whittier J. Child. & Fam. Advoc., 11*, 353.

Robins, S. L. (2000). *Protecting Our Students: A Review to Identify & Prevent Sexual Misconduct in Ontario Schools: Report*. Retrieved from https://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/about/pubs/robins/

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Chidl Sexual Abuse (2017). *Final Information Update*, Australia.

Saradjian, J., & Hanks, H. G. (1996). *Women who sexually abuse children: From research to clinical practice*: John Wiley & Son Ltd.

Shakeshaft, C. (2004). *Educator Sexual Misconduct: A Synthesis of Existing Literature*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Education Office of the Under Secretary.

Shakeshaft, C. (2013). Know the warning signs of educator sexual misconduct. *Phi Delta Kappan, 94*(5), 8-13. doi:10.1177/003172171309400503

Stennis Jr, J. (2006). Equal Protection Dilemma: Why Male Adolescent Students Need Federal Protection From Adult Female Teachers Who Prey on Them. *Journal of Law & Education, 35*, 395.

Stranger, M. B. (2015). *Female teachers who sexually offend against students: A collective case study.* (Doctor of Psychology), Alliant International University. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/docview/1657424672/fulltextPDF/EFB71A4650B94328PQ/1?accountid=14533

Solis, O. L., & Benedek, E. P. (2012). Female sexual offenders in the educational system: A brief overview. *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic, 76*(2), 172.

Spröber, N., Schneider, T., Rassenhofer, M., Seitz, A., Liebhardt, H., König, L., & Fegert, J. M. (2014). Child sexual abuse in religiously affiliated and secular institutions: a retrospective descriptive analysis of data provided by victims in a government-sponsored reappraisal program in Germany. *BMC Public Health, 14*(1), 282.

Sullivan, J., & Beech, A. (2002). Professional perpetrators: Sex offenders who use their employment to target and sexually abuse the children with whom they work. *Child Abuse Review, 11*(3), 153-167. doi:10.1002/car.737

Sullivan, J., & Beech, A. (2004). A comparative study of demographic data relating to intra-and extra-familial child sexual abusers and professional perpetrators. *Journal of sexual aggression, 10*(1), 39-50.

Sullivan, J., Beech, A. R., Craig, L. A., & Gannon, T. A. (2011). Comparing intra-familial and extra-familial child sexual abusers with professionals who have sexually abused children with whom they work. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology, 55*(1), 56-74. doi:10.1177/0306624X09359194

Teacher who abused five boys at private school jailed. (2016, 17 May). *BBC News*. Retrieved from: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-36311483

Vandiver, D. M., & Kercher, G. (2004). Offender and victim characteristics of registered female sexual offenders in Texas: A proposed typology of female sexual offenders. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment, 16*(2), 121-137. doi:10.1023/B:SEBU.0000023061.77061.17

Vandiver, D. M., & Walker, J. T. (2002). Female sex offenders: An overview and analysis of 40 cases. *Criminal Justice Review, 27*(2), 284-300.

Wijkman, M., Bijleveld, C., & Hendriks, J. (2010). Women don't do such things! Characteristics of female sex offenders and offender types. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment, 22*(2), 135-156. doi:10.1177/1079063210363826

Williams, L. M., & Farrell, R. A. (1990). Legal response to child sexual abuse in day care. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 17*(3), 284-302. doi:10.1177/0093854890017003004

Wolfe, D. A., Jaffe, P. G., Jetté, J. L., & Poisson, S. E. (2003). The impact of child abuse in community institutions and organizations: Advancing professional and scientific understanding. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 10*(2), 179-191

Wortley, R., & Smallbone, S. (2014, 10-12th September). *Situational Prevention of Sexual Abuse.* Paper presented at the Annual Conference, National Association for the Treatment of Abusers, University of York.

Table 1. Perpetrator Characteristics

Characteristic	Percentage
Age	
(M= 31.3 years, SD= 7.5)	
Under 20	0%
20-24 years	14%
25-29 years	38%
30-39 years	32%
40-49 years	11%
50 and over	2%
Ethnicity	
White	80%
Asian	6%
Not known	14%
Position of Trust	
Teacher	61%
Teaching assistant	17%
Residential careworker	8%
Foster parent	3%

Sports coach	3%
Social worker	1%
Private tutor	1%
College lecturer	1%
Nursery worker	1%
Cadet officer	1%
School transport supervisor	1%
Career stage	
Newly qualified	27%
Professional[a]	32%
Senior	13%
Not known	27%
Previous history	
Criminal record (non CSA)	3%
Criminal record (CSA)	-
Professional record (non CSA)	4%
Professional record (CSA)	-

a More than 3 years experience

b Holding a senior position of responsibility e.g. Headteacher, Care supervisor

Table 2. Victim Characteristics

Characteristic	Percentage
Number of victims[a]	
1	84%
2	10%
5-10	3%
>10	3%
Gender[b]	
Male	70%
Female	27%
Both	1.5%
Not known	1.5%
Age[c] (M= 15.1 years, SD= 1.3)	
<12 years	4%
13 years	10%
14 years	14%
15 years	32%
16 years	34%
17 years	15%
Not known	3%

Vulnerability[d]	
Recognised vulnerability[e]	27%
None	28%
Not known	45%
Temporal vulnerability[f]	35%
None	7%
Not known	58%

Note. Percentages do not total 100% as some abusers offended against more than one victim of different ages.

[a] Percentage of perpetrators with the respective number of victims

[b] Percentage of perpetrators with the respective gender of victims

[c] Percentage of perpetrators with victims of the specified age

[d] This information is not available for the complete sample

[e] These include special needs, disabilities, being a child in care

[f] This relates to experiencing specific difficulties around the time of the abuse e.g. domestic issues, friendship problems, academic and social difficulties

Table 3. Modus Operandi

Factor	Percentage
Period of abuse	
< 1 month	7%
1-6 months	41%
7-12 months	17%
1-3 years	15%
> 3 years	6%
Not known	13%
Location	
Outside organisation	61%
Of which:	
Perpetrator's home	44%
Victim's home	10%
Perpetrator's car	34%
In organisation	11%
Mixed	25%
Not known	3%
Online	54%
Grooming behaviour	

Sexualised contact via text/online	45%
Meeting outside organisation	34%
Allowing/encouraging visits to perpetrator's home	31%
Mobile telephone contact	62%
Online/social media contact	42%
Abusive acts	
Kissing/hugging/hand-holding	46%
Unspecified sexual activity	39%
Intercourse	38%
Sexual discussions (virtual environment)	38%
Oral sexual abuse	15%

Table 4. Criminal justice system responses

Response	Percentage
Police action	
Charges laid & court proceedings	77%
Investigation (NFA)[a]	11%
Interviews (NFA)	11%
No action	1%
Offences charged	
Abuse of position of trust (sexual activity)	39%
Sexual activity with child	25%
Abuse of position of trust (causing/inciting)	14%
Indecent assault	11%
Indecent images	6%
Pleas	
Guilty	58%
Not Guilty[b]	13%

Both	10%
Not applicable	19%
Outcome[c]	
Conviction	73%
Caution	6%
Not Guilty (jury)	6%
Not Guilty (order)	1%
No further action	15%
Not known/not applicable	3%
Sentence	
Immediate custody	60%
Suspended custody	27%
Community sentence	10%
Conditional discharge	2%
Mental health detention	2%

[a] No further action

[b] Of which 78% were found guilty after trial

[c] These results are impacted by the fact most cases in the sample were identified from court data or media reports of court cases. Also percentages total more than 100% as some offenders were both convicted and found not guilty on different charges.